

# Public Archaeology

## Arts of Engagement

edited by

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**Access Archaeology**





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# Introduction: Public Archaeologies as Arts of Engagement

Howard Williams

*By way of introduction to the book, this chapter sets out the principal recent developments and characteristics of public archaeology, focusing on the UK. By contextualising the chapters which originated as presentations in the 2017 student conference, as well as those contributions subsequently commissioned for the book, the specific theme of art/archaeology interactions in public archaeology is defined and its multiple facets are reviewed.*

## Introduction

This edited collection provides original perspectives on public archaeology's current practices and future potentials. It aims to respond to recent debates in public archaeology by both advancing existing discussions and identifying lacunae, inspired by the day conference of April 2017 *Archaeo-Engage: Engaging Communities in Archaeology*: the 2<sup>nd</sup> University of Chester Archaeology Student Conference. While a subsequent sister chapter reviews the conference itself and its transition into a publication (Williams *et al.* this volume), this introduction highlights the theme of art/archaeology interactions which emerged during the publication process. By 'art/archaeology' I here mean the multi-faceted ways by which art and archaeology are connected in public archaeological research. I argue that art/archaeology interactions inform and enhance strategies of public engagement, and that they are central to understanding archaeology's political and popular contemporary receptions and manifestations.

I specifically explore two related areas of art/archaeology intersections in public archaeology that permeate the contributions to this book:

- art of public archaeology;
- art as public archaeology.

Discussing projects that tackle either one or multiple of these themes, I show how public archaeology both fosters and critically evaluates the discipline's public and popular entanglements via visual and other artistic media. To set up the context for this discussion, I first define public archaeology in the UK today, and its principal challenges and concerns.

## Engaging communities with archaeology

Archaeology operates in and investigates societies with a powerful and engaging set of voices about the human past, the present and the future, addressing many key issues for contemporary societies, including climate change and resource scarcity, migration, death, disease and faith. Public archaeology encapsulates themes of economic, social, political, religious and environmental significance in the contemporary world (see Little 2012). Just as archaeology as a discipline brings together a host of specialisms which are fragmented and distributed across academic, not-for-profit, public and private companies (Little 2012), so is the study of 'public archaeology' today diverse and multi-faceted. Usefully and cogently, Moshenska (2017) identifies a series of ways by which UK public archaeology is manifest at present:

- Archaeologists working with the public;
- Archaeology by the public;
- Public sector archaeology;
- Archaeological education;
- Open archaeology;
- Popular archaeology;
- Academic public archaeology.

Public archaeology, like the discipline more broadly, has emerged and rapidly adapted to shifting political and economic environments (Jackson *et al.* 2014). It constitutes a cluster of different dimensions of archaeological theory and practice. Indeed, Grima's recent publication has advocated a 'multiple perspective model' for public archaeology, recognising the variety of approaches, attitudes and the needs of different audiences for archaeological ideas and practice (Grima 2016: 54). Like Moshenska, he regards public archaeology as a disciplinary practice and theoretical orientation for investigating the connections between the human past and contemporary society. Public archaeology is thus central to the evaluation and critique of archaeology in the contemporary world, including investigating the ways by which archaeologists engage with the public. While 'public archaeology' has been frequently perceived denigrated within the profession as a superficial add-on (Richardson *et al.* 2019), and remains perceived as peripheral to many archaeological endeavours outside the English-speaking world (Almansa Sánchez and Richardson 2015), in the UK at least it has become increasingly recognised as an integral aspect of archaeological endeavour. Therefore, if archaeology is essential to contemporary society, not a 'desirable extra' (Flatman 2012: 291), fostering sustainable and robust approaches to public archaeology is just as invaluable.

### **Public archaeology: creating and transforming communities**

A key debate for public archaeology in the UK today is how we conduct community engagement, and how we operate as a discipline, and as individual practitioners, in relation to different types of community. In this regard, at one level, 'community archaeology' is a sub-set of public archaeology – ('archaeology by the public', as defined above by Moshenska (2017)). However, its specific categorisation and parameters have also been intensely debated (Belford 2011; 2014; Isherwood 2012; Marshall 2002; Moser *et al.* 2002; Moshenska and Dhanjal 2012; Simpson 2008; 2009; Simpson and Williams 2008; Thomas 2017; Tully 2009). As Marshall (2002) suggests, it remains an opportunity for close and coherent fostering of community engagement and the co-production of archaeological knowledge (see also Ancarno *et al.* 2015). Responding to the rise of Native American protests against archaeologists in the US which led to the 1990 NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) legislation, there has been an increasing need for archaeologists in the US and elsewhere around the world to explicitly analyse their value and significance in relation to stakeholders (Little 2012).

Increasingly for the UK too, a bottom-up community-initiated/-driven archaeology is frequently regarded as preferable and enriching compared to professionally directed projects (see Faulkner 2009; Reid 2012). This is seen as a focus on empowerment and avoids what many projects are accused of: a tokenistic involvement of community members (e.g. Tully 2009; Thomas 2017). Moser *et al.* (2002), for instance, promote a multi-strand collaborative practice strategy, inspired by their work at Quseir, Egypt, to include:

- Communication and collaboration;
- Employment and training;
- Public presentation;
- Interviews and oral history;
- Education resources;
- Photographic and video archive;
- Community-controlled merchandising.

Strong involvement and participation by local communities is widely regarded as a positive way forward for all archaeological endeavours (Watkins 2012), at least where it is feasible, safe and affordable. This said, the definition of 'community', and the rhetoric of its deployment, can obscure complexities and nuanced interactions (Richardson and Almansa-Sánchez 2015: 201). Moreover, oft-derided 'top-down' projects can offer sustained professional support and guidance from the start to the finish of projects, helping with the delivery of feasible goals with positive outcomes for archaeological knowledge, the historic environment, the experiences for those participating, as well as fostering senses of place and identity (see Ainsworth 2015; Belford 2011; 2014; Nevell 2015). One of the critical limitations of

a bottom-up approach is that it may often accept the existence of static pre-existing communities as its points of reference. This in turn leads archaeological research to focus on attempting to satisfy existing perceived needs for archaeological engagement. Instead, carefully designed and implemented community archaeology projects involving close liaison between stakeholders and professional/academic archaeologists can harbour the capacity to transform community identities and perceptions of the past (Ancarno *et al.* 2015; Belford 2011; Carman 2011; Goldstein 2018). Moreover, close and sustained community dialogues can effectively enhance contributions to official records for the benefit of future generations their appreciation of and preservation of the historic environment (Hedge and Nash 2016). Community engagement might perhaps to better seen as future-orientated, rather than past- or present-focused.

In reality, public engagement is rarely primarily either top-down or bottom-up. Belford (2011; 2014) usefully employs Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation to evaluate how different relationships between community and professionals transpire. He identifies the power of community archaeology to develop social, economic and intellectual sustainability, the latter of which requires professional or academic guidance. Currently, most projects sit somewhere in the middle of that spectrum between 'bottom-up' and 'top-down', Belford argues. Moreover, we must be also mindful of the wide range of communities and the environments in which community engagements take place, making a 'one-size-fits-all' approach inadequate. For example, Williams and Williams (2007) identified the difficulties of gaining traction with communities with complex gravestone recording, but how community archaeology project can benefit of people in other, unexpected ways. Ainsworth (2015) has also advocated volunteer involvement in 'low-tech' non-invasive earthwork survey methods, thus identifying new archaeological resources and fostering awareness of the historic landscape (Ainsworth 2015; see also Belford 2014: 23). Coastal archaeology likewise offers a series of further examples where communities are involved in a range of capacities with heritage under threat from erosion and destruction. Examples of valuable community engagements through coastal and riverine archaeological work include the excavations of the early medieval cemetery at St Patrick's Chapel, Whitesands Bay, St Davids (Shiner *et al.* 2019), the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites investigated by the Shorewatch project in the Outer Hebrides and Shetland (Dawson 2016), the Thames Discovery programme (Cohen and Wragg 2017) and the ongoing innovative and geographically broad CITIZAN project.<sup>1</sup> Such professionally organised projects, whether site-based or landscape-orientated, reveal the potential of public participation following a 'citizen science' model: volunteers participate at multiple stages, including data-recording, data-entering, and participating in evaluative and interpretative procedures.

Public engagements in archaeological research is therefore phenomenal in its potential scope. Yet not only is there considerable untapped potential, effective negotiation with stakeholders in the UK still has a long way to go. This not only applies to dialogues with special interest groups, such as neo-Pagans and church authorities who have different concerns regarding the investigation of sacred sites, and the digging up of human remains in particular (Wallis and Blain 2011; Rathouse 2016), it also relates to a range of other groups and institutions with local, national and international interests in archaeological research and the historic environment (see McDavid 2002; Moser *et al.* 2002; Tully 2007). The complex and long-term relationships and conflicts between archaeologists and metal-detecting are a case in point: despite many challenges and problems, liaison with metal-detecting groups has been shown to be profitable and viable in the longer term, despite the need to retain advocacy against, and sustained criticism of, looting and the trade in antiquities (Bland 2004; Flatman *et al.* 2012; Bland *et al.* 2017). Flatman uses the discovery and investigation of the find-spot of the Staffordshire Hoard and its subsequent curation, analysis and display as a prominent UK example showing how 'licit' routes of engagement by amateurs can create extraordinary discoveries (Flatman *et al.* 2012: 76).

A further challenge is the frequently made assumption by archaeologists that communities exist as homogeneous entities. Indeed, archaeologists often still believe there is an undifferentiated 'public' or single 'community' within a fixed geographical setting, while ignoring the complexities of the groups participating in, and engaging with, archaeological projects (Moser *et al.* 2002). The variegated

<sup>1</sup> <https://citizan.org.uk/>



nature of responses to the excavation of human graves is a profitable illustration of this point. For the Oakington (Cambridgeshire) early Anglo-Saxon cemetery excavations, Sayer and Sayer (2016) emphasise the complexity of engagements with visitors and participants. This complements Goldstein's (2018) work focusing on the complex and careful negotiations with multiple stakeholder groups during and subsequent to excavations of the Orthodox Russian cemetery at Fort Ross (California, USA) (Goldstein 2018; see also Almansa Sánchez 2018: 203). The complexities of communities interested in human remains is effectively further explored for 20<sup>th</sup>-century conflict archaeology by Brown (2016). He identified the human remains retrieved by archaeologists from First World War conflict zones as a focal point in a nexus of interests and identities linking archaeologists (who include former soldiers), local communities, the deceased's family (if known), the military and regiment (if known), the nation (if discerned) and wider communities of amateur enthusiasts and interested parties. Indeed, the affinities of people to the past need not be framed in terms of biological ancestorhood. This is also revealed in Pearson and Jeffs' (2016) discussion of the responses and treatment of human remains retrieved during the excavation of a 'liberated African' cemetery on St Helena. Likewise, many neo-Pagan individuals and groups perceived spiritual, rather than (or alongside) biological, ties of ancestry with prehistoric British skeletons in museums (e.g. Giles and Williams 2016; Rathouse 2016). Similarly, the current commercial obsession of DNA-ancestry testing reveals the need for archaeologists to engage critically with claims of biological descent, many of which may be guided by uncritical concepts of race and ethnicity promoted by misleading commercial enterprises (see Booth 2018). In tackling these different 'communities', both real-world, digital or a mixture of the two, archaeologists must simultaneously offer critical evaluations of misunderstandings and misuses of archaeological knowledge whilst sensitively navigating rather than denouncing non-archaeological understandings of the historic environment (see also Thomas 2015).

### Politics and public archaeology

The above discussion has already touched on the inherent political nature of all archaeological research, yet it is important to reiterate that all of the subdivisions of public archaeology defined above by Moshenska (2017) are inherently political practices, attempting to tackle, critique and transform current society's experience and participation in archaeology. Current politics intersects with archaeology in almost every regards in the UK. Public archaeology's is not only about investigating and evaluating community engagements, its remit is also to identify and critique the many intersections between political agendas, discourses and organisations and the archaeological work and interpretations taking place as a result. This often involves tackling the legacies and narratives of archaeology's own imperial, colonial and nationalist past, as well as its current use and co-opting into nationalist and globalist paradigms (see Kohl and Fawcett 1995; Trigger 1984; Sommer 2017). The historic environment is the focus of complex contestations involving local, regional and national policies (e.g. Belford 2011). Indeed, government policies have not only encouraged, but also sometimes they have directed, public and community archaeology agendas, funding and policies (Simpson 2009; Jackson *et al.* 2014; Sayer 2014). Community archaeology is thus inherently political (Smith 2015), and tensions with indigenous groups in post-colonial environments find parallels in the UK in tensions and dialogues with neo-Pagans, some of whom have protested against the excavation and display of human remains (e.g. Smith 2015; Wallis and Blain 2011; Rathouse 2016).

Recent discussions of the interactions of archaeological knowledge and the political and public debates surrounding the cessation of the UK from the European Union ('Brexit') could be instructive in this regard (Bonacchi 2018; Brophy 2018). Academics cannot operate in a politics-free environment, nor can they always counter or control the use of their expertise and archaeological evidence for political ends. While future-proofing from political appropriation is impossible, Brophy (2018) rightly calls on archaeologists to be increasingly engaged as public intellectuals, contributing towards and debating their ideas beyond academic spheres (see also Tarlow and Nilsson Stutz 2013). This argument not only relates to the uses and misuses of archaeological ideas and narratives: Brexit is identified by Brophy as the latest threat to both the archaeological profession in the UK (e.g. Belford 2018) and the future of our built environment, as well as casting into sharp relief long-term trends in perceptions of Britain's past (Brophy 2018; see also Gardner 2017; Gardner and Harrison 2017; Richardson and Booth 2017). To be effective voices in challenging misuses of the past, particularly by populist politicians, we must



be willing to engage with debates over the long-term, argues Brophy (2018: 1655). Archaeologists must be responsible in their social media and public engagements, particularly against a broader European and global rise of right-wing appropriations of heritage and archaeology of which Brexit is but one manifestation (Niklasson and Hølleland 2018).

At local levels, archaeologists have long been encouraged to question and critique the imposition of authentic heritage discourses (Belford 2011; Carman 2011; Smith 2015), even when it means disagreements within the profession itself. As Flatman (2012) rightly highlights, not all public engagement is necessarily positive and constructive, and archaeologists can foster conflict and the oppression of identities and opportunities for local people as much as facilitate them. A key dimension here is the need for archaeologists to work sustainably and even to stay with projects that they worked with long after the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis has been completed, to advocate and challenge how the narratives are adapted and co-opted (Goldstein 2018). In this way, in some contexts, archaeological engagement with communities can constitute a form of positive political action on behalf of local people and their historic environment (Watkins 2012). Precisely how public archaeology engagements can be sustainable, and how the subdiscipline can evaluate its influence, is the next focus of our discussion.

### **Sustainability and evaluation of public archaeology**

There have been repeated calls for public archaeology as a whole to shift focus away from impact to evaluation and critique (Bonacchi 2018; Bonacchi *et al.* 2018; Isherwood 2015; Richardson and Almansa-Sánchez 2015: 203). Indeed, our ethics is undermined by existing limitations in our theory and methods, argue Richardson and Almansa-Sánchez (2015). They advocate that, rather than perpetuating the rhetoric of success, instead public archaeology must incorporate careful and embedded self-critiques of effective endeavours, as well as reflections on less successful strategies (see also Nevell 2015; Simpson and Williams 2008). Paul Belford (2011; 2014), notably, identified how this is possible in a UK context through negotiations between many different stakeholder groups. To achieve this, archaeologists have frequently voiced the aspiration for public archaeology to develop a clearer and robust theoretical framework, as well as a methodological consistency. This is a vision shared across real-world and digital public archaeologies, and has been most prominently articulated for post-colonial contexts where descendant communities are active (Marshall 2002; Moser *et al.* 2002; Perry and Beale 2015).

Indeed, public archaeology concerns more than working with communities or providing educational opportunities and skills; it also concerns the management and the construction of knowledge, and how we conceptualise, monetise and instrumentalise heritage in contemporary society (Richardson and Almansa-Sánchez 2015: 203). In this regard, it is not only about activities (Flatman *et al.* 2012), but long-term sustainable relationships and dialogues with communities on different scales and models (e.g. Faulkner 2009; Nevell 2015). Furthermore, as Belford highlights, community archaeology is concerned with fostering and transforming social memories, both of former places experienced and habited (Belford 2014: 22), but also broader senses of pastness and stories of origin (e.g. Jones 2015).

Goldstein (2018) outlines the need for long-term post-excavation dialogues with the community and other stakeholders, as well as before and during the project. The Cardiff-based CAER (Caerau and Ely Rediscovering) project claims sustainability not through perpetual fieldwork, but through, post-excavation analysis via adult learner courses (Ancarno *et al.* 2015). These instances reveal how a rich variety of practical and intellectual activities can perpetuate public archaeology projects within and beyond the communities in which they operate. This leads us to consider what constitutes 'social benefit' in public archaeology today.

### **Public archaeology and social benefit**

Archaeologists must remember that not everyone can and will engage with archaeology today, and we cannot presume everyone appreciates its benefits (Watkins 2012: 258). Archaeologists might wish to adapt itself to answering questions that specific stakeholder groups wish to answer and link to their agendas (Watkins 2012; see also Lewis 2014; Pudney 2017a and b), and whilst this might be seen as a

compromise it must be remembered that archaeology is, to a large degree, already client-funded or state-funded (through government, museums or universities).

The benefits for participants have become the focus of a range of studies. Recent discussions have focused on the innovative projects by Rachael Kiddey working with homeless people as both subjects and participants in archaeological research (Kiddey 2017), as well as those working with young offenders (Pudney 2017a and b; see also Belford 2014). Dig Greater Manchester has explicitly pursued the benefits of archaeological fieldwork as occupational therapy for those with learning disabilities (Grimsditch and Hawes 2015). Similarly, those with mental health issues were integrated as participants in survey work recording the earthworks of the medieval settlement of Studmarsh, Herefordshire as part of the Past in Mind project run by Herefordshire Mind (Lack 2014; Williams and Atkinson 2013). The Human Henge project is another initiative along similar lines: attempting to evaluate how engaging with archaeology might have mental health benefits (Heaslip and Darvill 2017). Working with those with both physical and mental health issues, Operation Nightingale has been lauded for its involvement of military personnel in archaeological fieldwork. In these instances, archaeologists are increasingly building in carefully designed mechanisms for supporting volunteers, but also evaluating the benefits upon participants (Finnegan 2016; see also Williams and Alexander this volume).

Broader evaluations by Neal (2015) and Sayer (2015) provide a provisional but valuable context for considering the benefits of physical activity, including digging and other routinised tasks, in mental well-being. Meanwhile many, including Ancarno *et al.* (2015: 125), emphasise the importance of evaluation to the co-production of archaeological knowledge; again, they promote the therapeutic dimensions of all manner of participation in archaeological practice. Yet digital engagement with archaeology (including the digital dimensions of many of the aforementioned projects), while widely discussed in terms of ethics and practice, has yet to be considered in detail in either therapeutic or social benefit terms. This is in spite of the vastly larger audiences possible through engagement with archaeological themes and topics identified not only in television documentaries but also through fictional films and historical dramas, as well as through digital resources and repositories, blogs, vlogs and podcasts disseminated via social media and static websites (e.g. Tong *et al.* 2015). Is physical engagement the primary mechanism for the social benefit for archaeology, or can digital/virtual mechanisms of engagement also possess and transform its social benefit?

### **Public archaeology's 'arts of engagement'**

Considering public archaeology's 'arts of engagement' cross-cuts the multiple strands of public archaeology and their aforementioned community engagements and political intersections. Likewise, issues of public archaeology's sustainability and evaluation, as well as its social benefit, are revealed by exploring the art/archaeology interface of public archaeology as a key dimension to current practice and future innovations (see Chittock and Valdez-Tullett 2016 for a recent discussion of key themes in art/archaeology connections).

Art is an important subject of archaeological investigation, as well as a key medium for public engagements with archaeology. Art is also a mechanism for the engagement itself, an arena for imagining the past, a mechanism for co-production and a metaphor for the creative and storytelling nature of the archaeological process. Art not only facilitates the recreation of past material cultures, built environments and landscapes for public engagement, but also it facilitates archaeological processes, practices and performances (Watson and Williams 2019; see also Cochrane and Russell 2007). As such, art can help mediate the interpretation of fragments and absences (Walsh and Williams 2019) as well as complex temporal sequences through the life-histories of artefacts and monuments (Evans and Williams 2019).

The archaeological process can incorporate art to its public engagements. For example, the Chester Amphitheatre project incorporated two artists in residence as one component of many other public engagement activities associated with this city centre excavation (Garner and Wilmott 2015: 78). Further projects do not regard art as a subsidiary element, but foreground art as a principal medium of public archaeology. The aforementioned CAER project focused on the media-stigmatised, economically and

socially deprived suburban housing estates of Cardiff around Caerau Hillfort (the largest prehistoric fortification in South Glamorgan). The project has become driven by objectives identified through meetings with the local community development agency, heritage institutions, schools and residents. The objectives addressed the need to transform negative associations with the communities, as well as the broader challenges faced by the communities. Art installations were part of an array of activities from geophysical surveys to dance performances, involving professional artist, Paul Evans, in all stages of the project, designing and facilitating engagement with heritage assets via eco-graffiti art installations, puppet shows and heritage trail designs, plus creating Iron Age-themed murals with local pupils (Ancarno *et al.* 2015). Pudney (2017b) discusses art as a key medium of involving young offenders in archaeological themes and subjects, where the art is the lasting legacy via a mural created by the participants.

Digital interfaces also have the potential to help facilitate access to, understanding of, and engagement with, a range of art, artefacts and monuments from past societies, including medieval church monuments (McEvoy 2018). In this regard, Was and Watson (2016) provide a useful case study of this approach in their report on the community art project in conjunction with Kilmartin Museum: *Living Symbols*. Inspired by fresh archaeological fieldwork, the first stage involved a range of participants (including primary school children) in sculpting designs in workshops with expert tuition and advice. This culminated in a multimedia installations at the museum (Was and Watson 2016). They suggest that this project constitutes an artistic and archaeological ‘union’.

Complementing the recording of ancient art and the creation of new artworks inspiring and co-creating public engagement, the efficacy of digital media are increasingly deployed by archaeologists as new virtual environments of art/archaeology interface. The phenomenal organic survival and visual immediacy of both individual artefacts and their archaeological contexts provided by the commercial archaeology project at Must Farm, Cambridgeshire, is less an example of community participation but rather of global public dissemination of archaeological data via social media. The Bronze Age discoveries can be accessed through a fixed website with dig and post-dig diaries with photographs and videos, as well as insights into the archaeological illustration of the conserved artefacts.<sup>2</sup> This example serves to reveal the complex world of online digital visual engagement that archaeologists find themselves operating within, promoting questions about the ethics and practice of digital engagement (Perry and Beale 2015; see also Williams and Atkin 2015). The effectiveness of Must Farm’s digital footprint finds a counterpoint in Romero Pellitero *et al.*’s (2018) discussion of 3D modelling of early medieval graves as a strategy of public engagement in the Pago Del Jarafí cemetery, and the range of co-creation projects that allow the public to record and contribution to digital repositories (e.g. Griffiths *et al.* 2015; Maxwell 2017). We can take this further and explore virtual worlds and their archaeologies, such as video games (Reinhard 2018), as critical media for public archaeologies of the future. These examples identify clearly that art/archaeological interfaces are set to be increasingly important for both real-world and digital public archaeology in coming decades.

## About the book

The discussion so far as set up the theoretical context and apparatus in which each contributing chapter sits. The select proceedings of the student’s research is the inspiration for this collection and six of the student group agreed to contribute their work and ideas to the development of chapters: Rachel Alexander; Aaron Clarke; Afnan Ezzeldin; Bryony Fisher; Bethan Humphries; and Shaun Parry. These were subject to peer-review and each chapter was systematically revised by the editors in liaison with the authors. These authored/co-authored student chapters have been combined with further contributions submitted by current and former postgraduate archaeology students of the Department and elsewhere, focusing on relevant themes of public archaeology. All papers have benefitted from multiple peer-review. We are also grateful to have the volume introduced and reviewed by two well-established voices in the fields of public archaeology and digital archaeology: Dr Sara Perry and Dr Seren Griffiths.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.mustfarm.com/>

The chapters in this book enfold multiple dimensions of the aforementioned art/archaeology interactions. Following this Introduction and a review of the pedagogic and academic rationale for the conference and its translation into a book project (Williams *et al.*), the book is structured into three sections. First, 'The Art of Engagement: Strategies and Debates in Public Archaeology' focuses on the practice and performance of public archaeology in contemporary society: art here referring broadly to the discipline's methods and techniques. Here we present eight chapters – five with contributions by former Chester students (Parry; Humphries; Fisher; Williams and Alexander; Stringfellow) and others especially commissioned (Beresford; Hijazi *et al.*; Pudney). In addition, three of the chapters evaluate projects which have explicitly focused on art as either the subject of public engagement (Beresford; Griffiths *et al.*) or creative engagement (Pudney). Meanwhile, early medieval furnished burial assemblages are considered as part of an 'art' of creating martial interpretations of warriors past and present for public consumption (Williams and Alexander).

The second section, 'Art as Public Archaeology: Digital and Visual Media' considers artistic media as modes of communicating archaeological discoveries and ideas within and beyond the academy. There are six chapters, one by a former Chester student (Ezzeldin). The digital media tackled include blogs (Williams), comics (Swogger), podcasts (Boyle), film (Barkman-Astles; Duckworth) and video games (Ezzeldin).

The third and final section, 'Art as Public Archaeology' contains four chapters, each exploring projects that straddle the divide and deploy art as subject and medium. First is former a Chester student focusing on Playmobil (Clarke), the recording of graffiti (McInnes), rock art and comics (Brophy and Sackett); and art within community archaeology projects (Giles and Croucher).

The resulting collection is therefore innovative in both its range and content on public archaeology in the UK. As well as being distinctive and contemporary in its development from a student-led research conference and the venue in which it finally appears.

## Conclusion

This chapter has identified art/archaeology interactions at the heart of public archaeology today, including: past art as a research focus for public archaeological research and debates; art/archaeological dialogues within archaeological practice; the arts as creative media for public engagement, participation and co-production in archaeological research; the investigation of contemporary artistic media in order to explore popular perceptions of the past, and art as an aspect and metaphor for the practice of public archaeology.

Almansa Sánchez (2018) has recently picked up the metaphor of Neil Acherson in suggesting that public archaeology is about the exploration of new territories and offering critical perspectives to enhance our social roles. This certainly applies to this volume's chosen field of interface between art and archaeology. Public archaeology as a critical theory of archaeology in contemporary society, needs to explore new territories, including innovative interactions between art and archaeology in real-world and digital realms, as well as build more robust theoretical frameworks and methodological applications. Moreover, as a publicly originated discipline about the interactions of past, present and future (Nilsson Stutz 2018), art/archaeological interactions must emerge as integral to the discipline, not as interesting add-on.

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